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THE HISTORY AND THE TEACHING
OF
SHIN BUDDHISM

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**THE HISTORY AND THE TEACHING
OF
SHIN BUDDHISM**

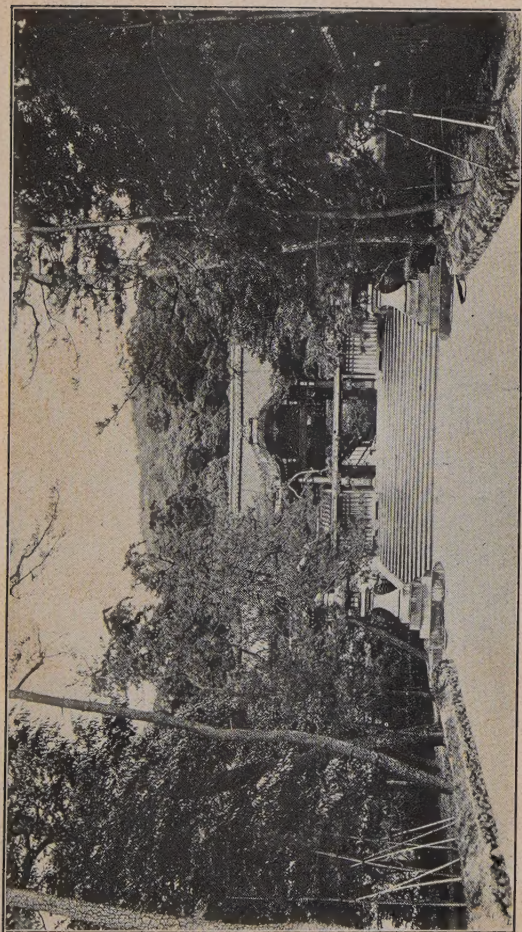
FOURTH AND REVISED EDITION



**KYOTO
THE EASTERN HONGWANJI
1928**

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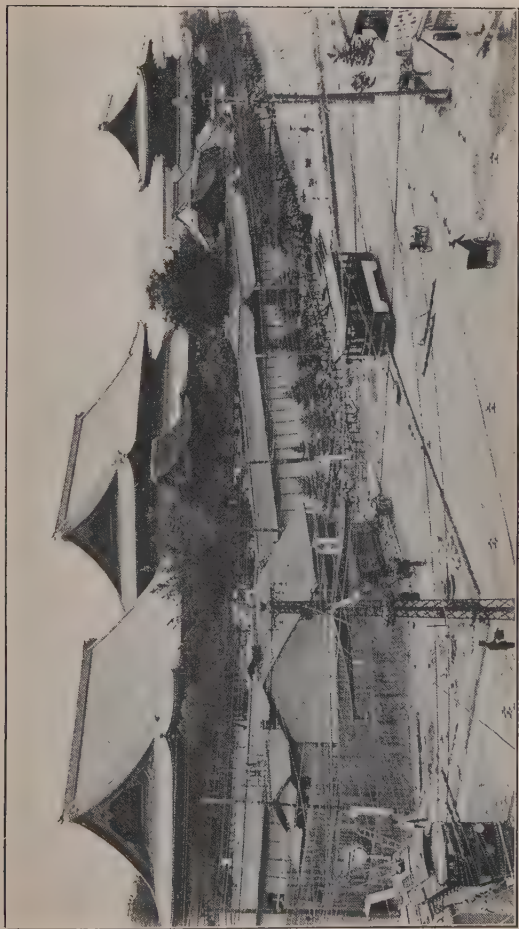
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The gate of the shrine at Higashi-Otani

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The Eastern Hongwanji buildings on Karasumaru

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PREFACE

THE doctrine of Amida represents the practical phase of Buddhism, and in Shin Buddhism we see the deep meaning of salvation by faith most thoroughly revealed; and it is in this that the essence of Buddhism as religion, apart from its philosophical and ethical aspects, consists.

Thus, the ultimate aim of the appearance of Sakyamuni on earth was to teach us this doctrine of Amida. Even Buddhist scholars who studied Buddhism purely from the scholarly point of view and who apparently did not belong to the Pure Land Sect, practically professed their faith in the doctrine of Amida. Among the various forms of this doctrine, we recognise in Shin Buddhism as taught and established by Shinran Shonin about seven hundred years ago, the most genuine, perfect, and adequate one. The Shin (True Sect) is, indeed, the efflorescence of Japanese Buddhism.

As there is an increasing demand for an exposition of the Shin doctrine in an accessible form to the western reader, we have decided to revise *The Principal Teachings of the Pure Land* which was originally edited and published by the Rev. Ejitsu Okusa, in October, 1910. The intention of the original editor and publisher who is unfortunately no more with us on this side of the world, was to commemorate the six hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the death of Shinran Shonin, the founder of Shin Buddhism.

In revising this we have not attempted to make any great alterations except to keep this edition to be abreast with the progress of time.

Missions Department of the
Eastern Hongwanji.

Kyoto, May, 1928.

I. HISTORY

I. SHINRAN SHONIN

DURING the past twenty five centuries that have elapsed since the death of Sakyamuni, his Good Law has grown into a huge tree with many outstretching branches; and each of these is now everywhere endeavouring to propound the Law according to its own light, and also to perpetuate its own religious practice. Of these branches, the one that most adequately interpret the Blessed One's way of salvation and that most intimately illustrates his life of faith, is the teaching of Shin Buddhism; for surely it is in the doctrine of the Shin that the ultimate signification of the Buddha's will to save is truthfully preserved in spirit. While it goes without saying that Shin Buddhism is the doctrine preached by the World-honoured Sakyamuni Buddha himself,

it was not until some seven hundred years ago, that is, until Shinran Shonin, the founder of Shin Buddhism, began to propagate the Buddhist teaching in a new light, that the Shin came to be recognised as transmitting the true spirit of the founder of Buddhism, which is to save all beings in a most effective way.

Shinran Shonin was born on the first of April 1173, in the village of Hino near Kyoto. His family was of the Fujiwara clan that occupied at the time the most important position in the empire, and his noble father, Arinori Hino, held an honourable office at the imperial court. The Shonin was the eldest son, and from this fact we can easily see what an auspicious prospect he had before him; for could not he, as heir to a noble family, occupy a high official rank, wield his influence as he willed, and indulge in the enjoyment of a worldly life? But the death of his parents, while he was yet a child, made

him depend upon his uncle, Lord Noritsuna; and this unfortunate circumstance left a very deep impression on his young mind, which, naturally sensitive, now brooded over the uncertainty of human life. At the age of nine, he left home to lead a monkish life at a Buddhist monastery called Shoren-in at Awataguchi, where Jiyei Sojo, the high priest took him as disciple, shaved his head, and gave him the Buddhist name, Hannen.

After this, the Shonin went to Mount Hiei and staying at the Daijoin which was in the Mudoji, pursued his study under various masters in the deep philosophy of the Tendai Sect, and disciplined himself according to its religious practices. He also sought to enlarge his knowledge by delving into the doctrine of all the other Buddhist schools; but he was unable to reach the true way leading to a release from this world of pain. He went even so far as to invoke the aid of the gods as well

as the Buddhas to make him realise an immovable state of tranquillity; but all to no purpose.

While thus vainly seeking his way of release, many years passed on; and he came to be looked up to and paid high respect by all his teachers and friends as one whose deep learning and unimpeachable morality were incomparable. His priestly rank advanced, and when he was twenty-five years old, he was made "Monzeki" (chief priest) of the Shoko-in. All these successes, however, were far from satisfying his noble spirit, which was ever hankering after the truth. His spiritual vexations increased all the more. When will the light come to this poor yet earnest truth-seeker?

In 1201, when he was twenty nine years old, we still find him in a state of mental uncertainty and disquietude. Determined to arrive at the settlement of all his doubts, he went daily to the Rokkaku-do, Kyoto, for one hundred

days beginning with January 10 of that year, and offered his earnest prayers to Kwannon Bosatsu to suffer him to see the light. At last, he had a vision of the Bosatsu, and through his instruction he went to Yoshimidzu in order to be taught by Honen Shonin.

According to Honen's doctrine, all sentient beings were sure to be saved and embraced in the light of Amida, and to be born in the Land of Happiness, eternal and imperishable, if they, however sinful, only believe in the name of the Buddha, and, foraking all the petty cares of the world at present and to come, abandon themselves to his saving hands so mercifully extended towards all beings, and recite his name with singleness of heart. Shinran Shonin listened to this doctrine most earnestly and with all the intensity that was in his heart, and finally he came to realise its truth which removed from his mind every shadow of doubt oppressing his spirit. Then, for the

first time, he came to perceive that Amida was the name of his true Father, and could not help seeing that, during these twenty-nine years of his existence, his life had ever been prompted by his Father's will to save, and that this true Father, from the very beginning of all things, had been unintermittently at work to save his sinful children through his eternal mercy. The Shonin was filled with joy and gratitude unspeakable. To commemorate this occasion of his spiritual regeneration, he was given by his master a new Buddhist name, Shakku. Abandoning his former adherence to the faith of the Tendai Sect, he now embraced the Pure Land Faith; that is to say, forsaking the uncertainty of Self-power, he became a believer in the efficacy and surety of salvation through a power other than his own, that is *tariki*, meaning Other-power.

After this, he resigned his priestly position as Monzeki, and becoming a

mere monk in black, he built a humble hut at Okazaki, where he continued to receive further instructions from Honen Shonin. His faith grew ever deeper until he thoroughly understood the signification of his master's doctrine. In October, 1203, our Shonin decided to follow the advice of Honen Shonin to enter upon a conjugal life and to give the world an example concretely illustrating their faith that the householder could be saved as much as the celibate monk. He was, therefore, married to Princess Tamahi, daughter of Prince Kanazane Kujo, formerly prime minister to the Emperor. He was thirty-one years of age while the Princess eighteen. This marriage, in fact, was undertaken to settle the religious doubt then prevailing as regards the final redemption of those householders, who, living with their family, have not completely destroyed the root of passion. Prince Kujo was one of those who were in doubt about

this point, and our Shonin made the practical demonstration of his belief by marrying one of his daughters and living the life of a man of the world. In the year following, a son was born to him, who was named Hanni.

In 1205, the Shonin was given by his revered master a copy of his work entitled, *The Sen-jaku Hongwan Nembutsu Shu*,⁽¹⁾—which we have reason to consider a memorable event in the life of Shinran Shonin; for it was to a very selected few that the master was pleased to give his own writing,—only to those disciples of his who distinguished themselves in learning and faith. The Shonin assumed yet another name this year in accordance with his master's wish. The name was Zenshin, meaning "good faith." In this wise, the relation be-

(1) A collection of those passages from the sutras and other Buddhist works, relating to the Nembutsu, invocation of the Buddha's name. The book is one of the most important text of the Pure Land School.

tween the Shonin and his master grew closer and closer, and every one recognised in him a spirit that harboured a most powerful faith equal to that of his master.

Fortunately or unfortunately, this fact led to a series of sad events in 1207 in the life of the Founder of Shin Buddhism. The beginning of it was the conversion of two court ladies into the faith of the Pure Land, who finally entered a nunnery. This greatly offended the feeling of the court and set it against Honen Shonin and his followers. Taking advantage of the court's displeasure, those Buddhist monks and scholars belonging to the Kofukuji monastery at Nara, who had for years been observing the spread of the Pure Land with unmitigated jealousy, now maliciously denounced its chief propagators to the court and asked for an imperial order to forbid the preaching of this doctrine. The court at last lent its ear to this vicious counsel and order-

ed Honen Shonin to leave the Capital for Tosa Province. Shinran Shonin, too, as one of the foremost disciples of the venerable Honen, could not escape the misfortune of being banished to Kokubu in Echigo Province, the northern part of Japan.

Shinran Shonin had now to be separated from his revered master as well as from his beloved family. We can well understand what sorrowful feelings were then astir in his heart, which, however, was not so darkened as to be altogether insensible to the other aspect of this sad event. Perceiving the gracious design of the Buddha even in the midst of the calamity, he thought in this wise: "Echigo, which is so remotely situated from the Capital, could perhaps never have a chance to listen to the Good Law of the Buddha if there were not such an opportunity as this. My banishment serves the excellent purpose of proselytism. If I happen to find even one soul embracing the same

faith as mine in that remote province, I shall regard it as owing to the wisdom of my venerable master." Thus thinking, he departed for his destination with cheerful spirits.

Therefore, all the way along his long journey, the Shonin made use of every occasion to give utterance to his faith and to make his people interested in the Good Law. When finally he reached his place of banishment in Echigo, he was even active in his missionary work, going about in the neighbouring villages and exercising his personal influence over the country people. In the meantime, Princess Tamahi, who, being left behind in the Capital, had spent days and nights in sorrow and without consolation, made up her mind to share with her husband the provincial loneliness in the faraway snowy region of Echigo, and let herself suffer the misery of banishment too.

Five years passed, and in November, 1211, the court issued an order to

pardon Shinran Shonin. The message carried by Lord Norimitsu Okazaki did not arrive at the destination until December of the same year.

To his receipt of the message, the Shonin signed himself Gutoku (which means "simple-hearted bald man"). He inwardly wished, by thus designating himself, to determine his own status among followers of the Buddha, which was neither that of a monk nor that of a layman,—his was indeed a most peculiar one. What other signification he wanted to give to this unique title was that he was one of those simple-hearted Buddhists who were not wise, nor intelligent, nor learned. He used to believe himself as an ignorant and sinful soul, as is implied in the literal sense of the title, Gutoku. This critical valuation of himself was an aspect of his religious belief. Afterwards, he had another name given himself, Shinran, by which he is now popularly known.

When he received the message of pardon, he wished at once to proceed to the Capital and see his venerable master again; but being prevented by various circumstances, it was not until January of the following year that he could leave Kokubu. When he reached Kodzuke on his way to Kyoto toward the middle of February, an unexpected news made him plunge into the deepest sorrow and despair; for it was the news of the death on January 25 of his revered master, Honen Shonin, whom he wished to see fervently once more before his final passing. His heart-breaking was so great, indeed, that he threw himself down on the ground and cried most piteously. He now abandoned his plan to proceed to the Capital, and making his way to Hidachi Province, he visited several towns along the route and preached his faith to the people.

Since January, 1217, he settled at Inada of Hidachi Province, and began

writing his *Kyo-gyo-shin-sho*,⁽¹⁾ in which is laid down the fundamental principle of Shin Buddhism. This was his first literary work, and the greatest, for on this is built the entire structure of Shin Buddhism. After the passing of his master, there were many of his disciples, who failed to grasp the spirit of their master and grossly misrepresented its vital signification. To save the latter from a wreckage, therefore, and to make known the true purport of Shin Buddhism (that is, the Pure Land doctrine) free from all possible misinterpretations, he wrote this most significant book. It was completed in the year 1224, when the Shonin was fifty-two years of age.

In the year following 1225, the Shonin built a temple at Takada of Shimo-

(1) The title literally means Teaching, Practice, Faith, and attainment; an exposition of the essential principles of Shin Buddhism as to what it teaches (kyo), practises (gyo), believes (shin) and attains (sho), 6 fasciculi.

dzuke Province. In 1226, the temple received the name, Senju Amida Ji, by an imperial order. After this, the Shonin began to draw its circles of propagation wider and wider around these two centres, Inada and Takada; and many men and women of good family gathered about him, who led them to the truth of the Buddhist faith. For twenty years in these localities he had been indefatigably engaged in the cause of Shin Buddhism, when he conceived the idea to visit the Capital again in 1232. He was sixty years old.

He left his residence at Takada to the care of his disciple, Shimbutsu; and accompanied only by two of his disciples, (while his wife remained alone at India), he started for Kyoto from which he had been long absent. In Kyoto he had no fixed residence, and moved from one place to another, among which we may mention Gojo-Nishinotoin, Okazaki, Nijo-Tominokoji, etc. He

was never tired of preaching the Good Law of the compassionate Buddha to whomsoever that came to him for spiritual guidance and helpful instructions; and to those who could not pay him a personal visit, he sent letters dwelling upon the joyful life of a devout Buddhist. Towards the end of his life the Shonin wrote various messages for the sake of uneducated followers of his faith, in which he expounded the essentials of Shin Buddhism in the plainest possible terms.

In 1262, he reached the great age of ninety, and began to show symptoms of illness on November 23; but he complained of nothing particularly, except speaking of the deep love of Amida and reciting his name with profound devotion. On the twenty-seventh, he bid farewell to his disciples, saying that he would be waiting for them in the Pure Land when the time came for them to join him there. After this, he kept on reciting the name of Amida.

On the following day, according to the example shown by the Great Muni of the Sakyas at the time of his Nirvana, he had his head turned towards the North, facing the West, and lying on his right-hand side, in a room at the Zembo-in at noon his reciting came quietly to an end showing that he finally returned to the Land of Light, when it is said that an odour of indescribably sweet fragrance filled the room and a flash of white light was seen across the western sky, as if unfolding a long piece of immaculate linen.⁽¹⁾

His remains were cremated on the twenty-ninth at the Yennin-ji, south of Toribeno, and his ashes were buried at Otani, Higashiyama, over which now stands a tombstone.

(1) This account of the life of Shinran Shonin is given according to the tradition so far accepted by the authorities, but there is no doubt that from the strict historical point of view it requires at some points a thorough revision.

The Shonin was apparently a manifestation of Amida. He was indeed a saving light who came among us some seven hundred years ago to dispel the darkness of this world. His life of ninety years on earth was an imprint eternally engraved in the hearts of sinners not yet freed from impurities. He lived among us to typify the life of a sinful mortal, who could yet be saved through his faith in the boundless love of Amida, and left a unique example for us who are intoxicated with the wine of passion. So the Shonin did not follow the steps of an ancient sage, who, leaving his home and severing all the family ties, would fly away from this world, in order to cleanse the heart, to sanctify the conduct, and to be thoroughly imbued with the purest religious sentiment, and who by virtue of these unworldly merits was permitted to be born in the country of the Buddha. The Shonin, on the contrary, married Princess Tamahi and lived a family

life, even after his confirmation in the Buddhist faith.

Four sons and three daughters were born through this union. The first, third, fourth, and fifth were sons, who were named respectively, Han-ni, Zen-ran, Myoshin, and Dosho; while the second, sixth, and seventh were daughters, whose names were: Masa-hime, Saga-hime, and Iya-hime. The Shonin could not help but deeply love these children, so dear to the heart of the father that he once confessed with a truly human weakness: "I am the one who, not knowing how to be blessed by the saving love of Amida, is drowned in the tempest of passion and has lost his way in the mountains of worldliness." The founder of the Shin, thus unlike most religious leaders, was a husband and father, who loved his family with all his heart and found his salvation in the eternal love of Amida.

It is due to this fact that in Shin Buddhism there is no distinction made

between the monk and the layman as regards their outward religious practice; while in all the other Buddhist schools the monk leads a life of celibacy and refrains from eating animal food, the followers of the Shin have no such special order among them, for their "monks" marry and eat meat if they like. Their religious life, therefore, consists in continuing to live an ordinary human life, not necessarily, struggling to free themselves from the so-called "defilements" of the flesh, and in leaving the grave matter of salvation entirely in the saving hands of Amida; for theirs is only to be grateful for the Buddha's saving love and to express this gratitude by the observance of all the moral laws and the efficient execution of their respective duties. This faith and this way of living were exemplified by our venerable Shinran, the founder of Shin Buddhism.

The Shonin had many devoted disciples, among whom the following were

the most noted: Shoshin, Shimbutsu, Junshin, Muishin, Myoho, Yuien, Nyusai, Saibutsu, Kakushin, Ren-ni, etc. There were among these disciples some who had at first entertained an idea to murder the master, thinking him to be the enemy of Buddhism; but as soon as they approached the Shonin, his personality so powerfully impressed them that they at once abandoned the evil design and became the most devoted of his disciples. There were, again, others who grew more attached to the master, because he was revealed to them in a vision as an incarnation of Amida. It is not, therefore, difficult for one to realise even in these remote days with what veneration he was regarded by these people; indeed, who could refrain from revering him as a Buddha? In spite of these facts, the Shonin refused to regard these devoted followers of his as disciples, but considered them his best friends embracing the same faith, or his younger brothers growing under

the guidance of the one spiritual father. He respected and loved every one of them as such, declaring: "I, Shinran, have no disciples in faith." It is evident then that the master entertained no thought of styling himself a religious leader or teacher, he only regarded himself as a blessed child living in the all-embracing love of Amida.

In his old age, he wrote many books, in which he praised the love and virtue of the Buddha, confessed his faith, and propounded the principles of Shin Buddhism; and it is through these writings that we have now access to the inner life of our Founder. Among the chief works of his besides the one already referred to, *The Kyo-gyo-shin-sho*, we mention the following:

1. *The Gutoku-sho*. The title means literally "the simple-hearted bald man's notes." This is the name given by Shinran Shonin to his own writing in which he declares his religious faith as a simple-hearted monk. By "bald"

is meant a shaved head, two fasciculi.

2. *The Jodo-monrui-jusho*. An abbreviated *Kyo-gyo-shin-sho*, in which such passages in the sutras as relating to the Pure Land doctrine are systematically collected.

3. *The Nyu-shutsu-nimon-ge*. "Stanzas concerning the two gates, entrance and exit." The entrance is to enter into the Pure Land, and the exist means coming back to this world of defilement in order to save one's fellow-beings.

4. *The Jodo-sangyo-wojo-monrui*, in which such passages collected from the three Pure Land Sutras as relating to one's birth in the Pure Land.

5. *The Wogen-eko-monrui*. A classified collection of those passages which relate to the Buddha's grace towards us in its twofold operation, going and coming back. The going means being born in the Pure Land, and the coming back is re-appearance in this world.

6. *The Jodo-wasan*. Hymns of the Pure Land.

7. *The Koso-wasan.* Hymns dedicated to the Seven Great Fathers of Shin Buddhism, in India, China and Japan.

8. *The Shozomatsu-wasan.* Hymns concerning the three periods of religion, "orthodox," "representative," and "declining," in which it is explained that for us born in the declining period Shin Buddhism is the most appropriate religion.

9. *The Yuishin-sho-mon-i.* A commentary work on the venerable Seikaku's book on faith, in which is set forth the doctrine of salvation by faith alone.

10. *The Songo-shinzo-meimon.* The scriptural passages explained which were inscribed on a sheet of paper bearing the name of Amida and the portraits of the Fathers.

11. *The Ichinen-tanen-shomon.* "My view concerning the controversy between the One Thought and the Many Thoughts."

Besides these, we have two volumes of his letters collected by his disciples, which are entitled:

12. *The Matto-sho*. "The Light of the Declining Period." A book in which are collected some of Shinran's sayings and letters.

13. *The Go-shosoku-shu*. Letters of the Venerable Shinran.

Still later, an immediate disciple of the master probably Yui-en-bo compiled sayings of the latter under the title:

14. *The Tan-ni-sho*. A work written with a view to settle the heterodoxical opinions that were entertained by some Shin followers concerning the real signification of the teaching of Shinran. An English translation of this has appeared recently.

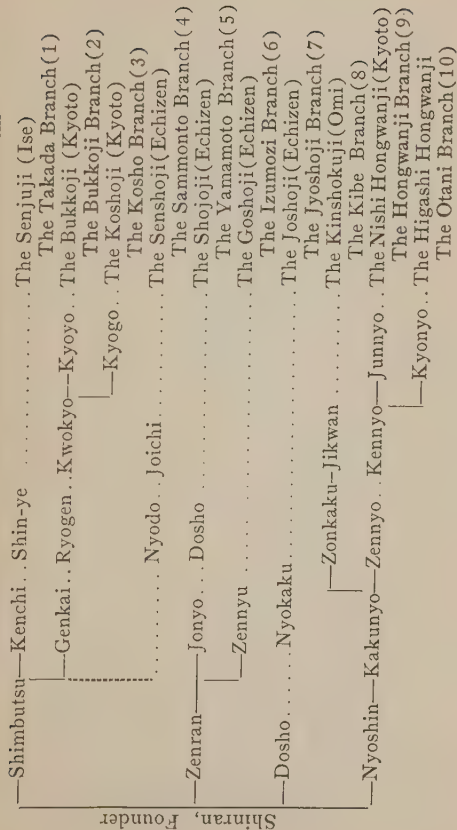
By the aid of these books, we are able to look into his faith and conviction as it was alive in his heart; and our exposition of the doctrine of Shin Buddhism will be according to these works.

II. THE HONGWANJI

AFTER the death of Shinran Shonin, Shin Buddhism gradually gained followers, and has at present become the most influential school of religion in Japan. And the Shin itself has come to divide itself into ten branches, which, however, are historical and not doctrinal. The following tabular view gives a general scheme of the pedigree of the ten principal branches of Shin Buddhism now flourishing in Japan.

Among these ten branches, those most flourishing at present are the Higashi (East) and the Nishi (West). Their history is traceable to the two brothers, Kyonyo and Junnyo, under whom the one Hongwanji came to be divided into two. The reason why the Hongwanji came to have the largest number of followers under its charge, is because its successive Hosshus (literally, "masters of the law," that is head priest) come

A Schematic View of the Ten Branches of Shin Buddhism



down from the family line of Shinran Shonin himself, and also because its eighth Hosshu, Rennyo was a most remarkable spiritual power, exercising great influence over his followers. Let us now go on at some length with the history of the Hongwanji.

It was in the winter of 1272 that the tomb of the Shonin at Otani Higashiyama, was removed to the western part of the same grounds, where a hall was constructed, and his image was enshrined in it. The Emperor Kameyama ordered it to be named the "Kuon Jitsujo Amida Hongwanji," whence comes the name "Hongwanji" as an abbreviation of the full title. Kaku-shin-ni, or Iyahime, the youngest daughter of the Shonin, was made the guardian of the shrine, while Nyoshin, son of Zenran, became the Jyushoku or "residing priest" of the Hongwanji. Thus, we have Shinran Shonin for the founder of the Hongwanji and Nyoshin Shonin for the second patriarch.

Kakunyo, grandson of Kakushin-ni, succeeded Nyoshin, and it was he who compiled "A Life of Shinran, the Hongwanji Shonin, with illustrations," in two fasciculi, which is known as *the Godensho*,⁽¹⁾ the "Honourable Biography." The author was then twenty-six years old. His other works are:

1. *The Shui-kotokuden*. A supplementary work to the "Life of the Old Sage." The Old Sage means Honen Shonin the teacher of Shinran Shonin, 9 fasciculi.

2. *The Kuden-sho*. "Sayings and doings of Shinran, which were orally transmitted by Nyoshin to Kakunyo, 3 fasciculi.

3. *The Gaija-sho*. "Refutation of

(1) The whole text is recited aloud on the 25th of November every year, when a festival takes place in honour of the founder of Shin Buddhism, beginning in the evening of 21st and lasting till the morning of 28th of the month. An English translation is to be found in a study of Shin Buddhism by the late Rev. Gessho Sasaki.

the (twenty-one) false views (with regard to the teaching of Shinran)," 2 fasciculi.

4. *The Shudzi-sho*. A work treating of Nembutsu (the reciting of the name of Amida), of which the first four chapters record some sayings and doings of Shinran, while the last one chapter is devoted to the statement of the author's own views on the holding fast (*shudzi*) of the doctrine of Nembutsu.

5. *The Gwan-gwan-sho*. A collection of such passages as relating to the original vows (*hongwan*) of Amida.

6. *The Saiyo-sho*. A book explaining the five essential ones out of the forty-eight vows of Amida.

7. *The Shusse-gwan-ni*. A work on the fundamental meaning of the appearance of Sakyamuni on earth.

8. *The Ho-on-ko-shiki*. A prayer for the memorial service of the Founder.

In those days, Japan was divided

between two rival dynasties, Northern and Southern, and their struggles for the ascendancy reduced the country, especially the Capital, into a state of constant disturbance; and the shrine at Otani was burned to the ground by the soldiers in 1336. Kakunyo Shonin, therefore, retired to the Kuon-ji in Yamashiro, where he stayed for two years until the shrine was rebuilt in 1338, and in the year following he came back to Otani. For some one hundred and twenty years thence, the shrine suffered no misfortune.

The eldest son of Kakunyo was called Zonkaku, and being a great scholar, wrote many works, of which the most important is *The Rokuyo-sho* in ten fasciculi, which is a commentary on Shinran Shonin's *Kyo-gyo-shin-sho*. The following are his other important writings:

1. *The Senjakushu-chuge-sho*. A commentary on Honen's *Senjakushu*, 5 fasciculi.

2. *The Haja-kensho-sho*, three fasciculi. A work refuting seventeen erroneous views as regards the teaching of Shin Buddhism, and revealing its truth.

3. *The Jodo-shin-yo-sho*, two fasciculi. "A Treatise on the Essential truths of the Pure Land Doctrine" given by the author to his disciple, Ryogen.

4. *The Shojin-hongwai-shu*, two fasciculi. "A Treatise on the Fundamental Intention of All the Gods."

5. *The Kecchi-sho*, two fasciculi. A book recording the successful debate with the followers of the Nichiren Sect in 1338.

6. *The Hokke-mondo*, two fasciculi. "Questions and Answers in the Controversy with the Nichiren Sect."

7. *The Busen-sho*, two fasciculi. A work in which the teaching of the Pure Land is compared to travelling on water by boat and that of the "Path for the Wise" to walking on foot, show-

ing how much easier it is to travel by the first method.

8. *The Ho-on-ki*, two fasciculi. A book explaining how deeply grateful we should feel towards our parents and teachers.

9. *The Kemmyo-sho*. A book revealing the merit contained in the name of Amida.

10. *The Jimyo-sho*. A work urging us to hold the name of Amida.

11. *The Zonkaku-hogo*. "A religious discourse by Zonkaku," written especially for Kaiyen.

12. *Nyonin-wojo-kikigaki*. A book treating of women's salvation.

13. *The Jodo-kemmon-shu*. A book describing the loathsomeness of the defiled world and the joys of the Pure Land.

14. *The Tandoku-mon*. "A tract praising the virtue of Shinran Shonin."

This learned author, however, did not succeed Kakunyo as Jyushoku or "residing priest" of the Hongwanji.

Zenno, Shakunyo, Gyonyo, and Zonnyo are the names appearing in the patriarchal line after Kakunyo; and it was not until after these residing priests that the eighth patriarch, Rennyo Shonin, who was the eldest son of Zenno, came on the stage to give a new impetus to the development of Shin Buddhism in Japan. Before the appearance of this remarkable personage, the Hongwanji was far from being an influential Buddhist denomination. Without him, it was perhaps impossible for the Hongwanji to achieve such a phenomenal progress and gain its full strength as it really did.

Rennyo Shonin was born at Otani on February 25, in 1415. His boyhood name was Hotei-maro, and he proved even in his early life to be a remarkable genius. On December 28, 1420, his mother mysteriously disappeared, leaving an advice for her now six years old boy, saying, "My dear child, make it your life's duty to revive Shin Bud-

dhism." Nobody knows where she retired, but her instruction left such a deep impression upon the boyish mind of Hotei-maro that he well remembered it later; and when he was fifteen years old he firmly made up his mind to carry out actually what his mother commanded him before.

When he reached seventeen years of age, he had his head shaved at the Shoren-in and assumed the Buddhist name, Kenju. After he had first studied the philosophy of the Hosso school at Nara, he returned to Otani, and confining himself in the monastery there, he applied himself most assiduously to the study of the doctrine of his own school until he was thirty.

In 1447, he travelled in the Eastern districts of Japan, and in 1449, in the North, everywhere visiting those historical landmarks which were associated with the memory of his forefather, the founder of Shin Buddhism; wherever he went, he was never tired of preach-

ing the Good Law and giving a new life to the decadent faith of his followers.

In 1457, his father Zonnyo died, and as Rennyo Shonin he now succeeded him at the age of forty-three and became the Jushoku (residing priest) of the Hongwanji. In June, 1460, he wrote at the request of his disciple Dosai, a book entitled *the Sho-shin-ge-taii* which is a short commentary work on Shinran's *Sho-shin-ge*. It was about this time that he began writing the "Letters" (*Ofumi*) in which he explained the doctrine and faith of Shin Buddhism in the plainest language thus enabling even simple-hearted seekers of truth to comprehend the Shin teaching. Numerous are these "Letters" and it can be said without exaggeration that the revival of the faith of Shin Buddhism is mainly due to these "Letters" penned by the Shonin. His influence, thus, gradually gained ground all over Japan, and

the increasing number of pilgrims steadily pressed on to the founder's shrine at Otani. The growing popularity, however, of Rennyo attracted the envious attention of the monks on Hiei-zan, whose bitter hatred of the rival finally induced them to destroy the Otani shrine by fire on January 10, 1465.

This compelled Rennyo to flee from Otani carrying the image of Shinran with him. For a while he settled in Otsu where he made his residence at the Chikamatsu-dera, a temple belonging to the Miidera. He did not stay long there, and moved from one place to another until in April, 1471, he made a trip to the northern district of Japan; and after preaching at various places in Echizen and Kaga Provinces, he built a temple at Yoshizaki, Echizen. Here again he attracted numerous followers from all the neighbouring districts, who came to him earnestly inquiring about the faith of Shin Buddhism and

asking for his personal instructions. His success was most phenomenal.

The Governor of Kaga Province, Togashi by name, however, who had been harbouring an antagonistic feeling towards the Hongwanji and its supporters, made a sudden attack by force upon the temple at Yoshizaki in August, 1475. The Shōnin had to run away from his abode to the neighbouring province, Wakasa, which he reached by boat. The Shin followers of Kaga grew most indignant at this unjustifiable conduct on the part of their governor, and rose as one man, declared war on him, and having succeeded in overturning his government, they took possession of the entire province of Kaga as under the control of the Hongwanji. This violent action of his devotees, however, did not please Rennyo, and they were severely reprimanded.

After this, he went on with his preaching without disturbance; and in 1477, aided by Dosai, his disciple, he

made a plan to build the main temple of Shin Buddhism at Yamashina. The Hall of Statue was completed in August, 1480, where the statue of the Founder was removed from its temporary shelter at the Chikamatsu-dera. The main hall was finished in June of the following year.

When, in 1489, Rennyo Shonin was seventy-five years old, he resigned his position as "residing priest" of the Hongwanji, whose duty now fell upon his son, Jitsunyo. In 1496, he built a branch temple at Osaka in Settsu Province, where he resided for four years. In February, 1499, he again removed to the main temple at Yamashina, and on March 25 of the same year he died at the advanced age of eighty-five.

Rennyo was a rare religious genius. He may be regarded as an avatar of Shinran Shonin, the Founder of Shin Buddhism, who came on earth over again from his abode in the Pure Land

to save his faith from decline and fall. His preaching, which was the outcome of an overflowing heart, was full of love and kindness, and was like water for the thirsty, like medicine for the sick. After his death, Jitsugo wrote a biography of his illustrious predecessor in one volume, called *Rennyō Shōnin Goichidai Ki Kikigaki*, while another biography, *Rennyō Shōnin Itoku Ki*, was compiled by Rengo, another son of Rennyō. His "Letters," eighty in number and in five fasciculi, were collected by Ennyō, son of Jitsunyo, under the title of "Ofumi," which means the "Honourable Letters." Since then, the followers of the Hongwanji Branch have made it their daily religious practice to chant the Shoshin Nembutsu Ge and the Wasan and to recite the Letters before their family shrines of the Buddha.

Thus was the Hongwanji established by Rennyō, at Yamashina. After him came Jitsunyo, who, in 1525, handed

over his high priesthood to Shonyo, son of Yennyō. During the latter's office, that is, in August, 1532, Rokkaku Sadayori, helped by unruly followers of the Hokke Sect, assailed the Hongwanji and burned it to the ground. Thereupon, Shonyō, carrying the statue of the founder with him, moved to the branch temple in Osaka (at Ishiyama), where he died in 1554.

He was succeeded by his son, Kenyō. In 1570, he was forced to wage war on Oda Nobunaga, the famous general, who frequently hurled his strong army against the Hongwanji, but with no perceptible success; for the followers of the Shin were so devoted to their cause that they were ready to sacrifice their lives whenever necessary.

In 1580, Kenyō Shonin, in accordance with the Imperial command, contracted terms of peace with Oda Nobunaga and removed to Saginomori in the Province of Kii. In 1582, however, the unfaithful general planned an un-

expected assault upon Saginomori with a large army. To capture Kennyo as prisoner of war, his soldiers were about ready to force the gate of the Hongwanji on June 3, when the news of the assassination of the general by his retainer, Akechi Mitsuhide, reached the attacking enemy, which thereupon beat a hasty retreat. Kennyo Shonin and his temple were thus miraculously saved from the impending peril.

In 1583, Kennyo moved to Kaidzuka in Idzumi; in 1591, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, the illustrious general, donated a tract of land at Nishi-Rokujo in the city of Kyoto for the rebuilding of the Hongwanji, Kennyo lived only one year after his last removal to Kyoto, for he died in the year following (1592). The mantle of the residing priesthood now fell upon the shoulders of Kyonyo, the eldest son of Kennyo.

III. THE EASTERN HONGWANJI

IN September, 1594, Kyonyo Shonin resigned his position as Jushoku (residing priest) of the Hongwanji at Horikawa, Nishi-Rokujo, in favour of his brother, Junnyo, while Kyonyo himself made his residence at the new Hongwanji which was built in 1602 at Karasumaru, Higashi Rokujo, the site for which was donated by Tokugawa Iyeyasu, the founder of Tokugawa Shogunate government. Since then, the Hongwanji at Horikawa was designated the Western Hongwanji and the one at Karasumaru the Eastern Hongwanji. With the co-existence of these two centres of power, the followers of the Shin and their numerous local temples were naturally divided into two groups, alleging their loyalty to either of these two mother Hongwanjis. Those who went to the Eastern Hongwanji were called the Eastern Branch, and the other the Western.

Ever since that time, these two branches of the Hongwanji have kept on their brotherly relations, each endeavouring to contribute to the prosperity of their common cause. In 1881, the Eastern branch came to be known as the Otani Branch, while the Western the Hongwanji Branch.

After the division, those who successively occupied the position of Jushoku (residing priest) or Hosshu "Lawmaster" at the Eastern Hongwanji were: Kyonyo, Sennyō, Takunyo, Jyonyo, Iichinyo, Shinnyo, Jyunyo, Tatsunyo, Gonnyo, Gennyō and Shonyo. The present Hosshu is Sennyō whose other name is Kocho.

Since its first establishment in 1602, the Eastern Hongwanji had suffered no disaster until 1788 when the great fire of Kyoto consumed the greater part of the city, and the temple too could not escape its devastating progress. It was rebuilt in 1798, but in 1823 it was again destroyed by fire. The

building was restored in 1835, and burned again in 1858, when Kyoto suffered another great fire. Though a temporary hall was constructed in 1860, it met the same disaster as before, when a war broke out within the city in 1864. The present group of magnificent building was started in 1879 and finished in 1895. To prevent the recurring of the disaster which so frequently it had met with, an effective measure was taken by making the waters of the lake Biwa accessible to the main parts of each building; thus when a screw is released wherever necessary, a shower of water at once puts out any fire that might break out.

The building is entirely of wood, perhaps the largest in the world of this kind of construction. Visitors will notice a row of coils of hair-ropes along the corridor connecting the two main halls. As to these hair-ropes there is an episode which is worthy of remark. When the reconstruction of

the halls was started, it was found that no ropes were strong and heavy enough to bear the weight of the huge timbers which were needed for the work. The builders thought that if they could get ropes made of human hair they would perfectly answer the purpose. When this idea became known among the women-devotees of the Eastern Hongwanji, they voluntarily proposed to supply the want. They had their long black hair cut off willingly providing a sanctuary for Amida Buddha as well as for Shinran Shonin, the founder of the Sect. The ropes thus woven out numbered as many as fifty three coils, of which twenty nine were used up while the reconstruction was going on, and twenty four are still preserved in good condition. The largest of them measures thirty six feet in length and fifteen and half inches in circumference, weighing more than one ton.

The Eastern Branch, since its early history, has encouraged the study of its

canonical writings and the education of able preachers; and it was during 1661–1672 that the Lecture Hall of the Kwanzeon-ji was removed from Tsukushi, and the first college was established in the Shosei Garden, which is better known as Kikoku-tei. In 1754, this college was transferred to Takakura, Kyoto, and the curriculum was prepared on an extended scale. This is what is known as the Takakura College. Among the many scholars that were educated at the College, there were the following: Eku, Enen, Erin, Zuie, Jinrei, Senmyo, Tonne, Hokei, Gito, Hokai, Daigan, Tokuryu, Reiwo, Reiyo, Shuzon, Gijyo, Ryuon, Gido, Jingo, Giten, Gyochu, Sengan, Senryu, Kakuju, etc.

By these savants, the philosophical foundations of not only Shin Buddhism but all the other Buddhist schools were systematically investigated. Since the introduction of western science and philosophy into the Far East, the Col-

lege established a new department where they were studied. In 1901, this new department was transferred to Sugamo, Tokyo, as an independent institution to meet all the requirements of modern education. The College was known by the name of Shinshu Daigaku, and was first presided over by Manshi Kiyozawa (1868-1903) who was succeeded by Bunyiu Nanjio (1849-1927).

In 1911, this new College was transferred back to Takakura, Kyoto, and the name was changed into Shinshu Otani Daigaku. The first president was Eiyo Otani, an uncle of the present Hosshu Kocho. He was then the chief of the educational department of the Eastern Hongwanji. During his presidency, new buildings were constructed in Karasumaru-gashira the street running up north of the Kyoto railway station. Bunyiu Nanjio succeeded him after a while; and in 1922, the college was recognised according to the university

ordinance, which regulates the establishment of all the highest institutions in Japan, and was recognised officially by the Educational Department as a University called Otani Daigaku. At present it is presided over by Mr. M. Inaba.

Since 1888, the Eastern Hongwanji has been building schools for boys as well as for girls in various parts of Japan, the largest of which is now at Imakumano, Kyoto, where seven hundred boys chiefly belonging to the Shin Sect are educated. One can judge from this how increasingly influential is growing the educational activity of the Eastern Hongwanji.

Periodicals of various sorts are issued by this branch of Shin Buddhism. *The Shinshu* (Shin Buddhism) is the official organ containing the business reports of the Sect and accounts of missionary activities at home and abroad. The paper in which are published the results of scholarly investigation re-

lating to religion and philosophy in general is called *The Otani Gakuho*, while as one feature of the college activities, is published in English a quarterly journal called *The Eastern Buddhist*, which is devoted to the study of Mahayana Buddhism, and which is the only periodical of the kind in this country.

The Eastern Branch of Hongwanji is at present showing the tendency to become a spiritual centre of Japan. It has over fifty branch temples (Betsuin), over eighty one hundred sixty local temples (Matsu-ji), and several hundreds of lecture halls (Sekkyojo) distributed all over the country. The managers of the branch temples are called either Rimban or Jushoku, or Shunin, while the residency of the local temple is hereditary as is the Law Master (Hosshu) of the mother Hongwanji. The Buddhist families belonging to the denomination are estimated at several millions.

The followers of this Shin Buddhism belong either to a branch temple (Betsu-in), or to a local temple (Matsuji), or to a lecture hall (Sek-kyojo); and they are called its "Danto" (supporters or donors) or "Koku" (members or association). The relation between the local temple and its supporters is quite intimate.

Missionaries are regularly despatched from the headquarters, who will preach on fixed dates at these temples of various grades. There are at present about 2500 of such travelling preachers. In the larger towns there are some stationary teachers whose mission is to visit factories, educational institutions, young men's associations, etc.; they may also respond to invitations from the military posts stationed there. There are about 120 stationary teachers. We have, further, many religious advisers who are sent to teach in the penitentiaries at the request of the government.

The Eastern Hongwanji also spends much for philanthropy and social service. One of its successful works attracting much public attention is the establishment of a free lodging station for the poor, in Tokyo..

The building of a branch temple (betsuin) at Shanghai, China, in 1876, marked the beginning of foreign missionary work by the Eastern Hongwanji. Since then, missionaries have been sent to several places in China, Korea, and other lands. These foreign missionaries are called Kaikyoshi, meaning carriers of the Good Law throughout the world in order to bring our brethren to enlightenment.

II. PRINCIPAL TENETS OF THE SHIN

I. THE CANONICAL BOOKS

THE Buddha Sakyamuni left no writings of his own, and all we have of his teachings come from what his disciples retained in their memory and committed to writing after his death. These writings are called Sutras or canonical books, of which a large number is still in existence. Among them, there are three Sutras giving a full account of Amida Buddha who brought his effective name into perfection in order to save all sentient beings from sinking into the abyss of sin. The following are the three:

I. THE MURYOJUKYO. Two volumes. In this Sakyamuni talks to Ananda and Maitreya on the Vulture Peak concerning the spiritual history of Amida. It was translated into Chinese in 252 A.D., by Sanghavarman.

II. THE KWANMURYOJUKYO. One volume. This records how Sakya-muni accompanied by Ananda came to the royal palace in Rajagriha where Queen Vaidehi was imprisoned and what he preached to her concerning the possibility of all sentient beings to be reborn in the Pure Land of Amida after the deliverance from this world of suffering. It was translated into Chinese in 424 A.D., by Kalayasas.

III. THE AMIDAKYO. One volume. In this is recorded what Sakyamuni preached to Sariputra at the garden of Anathapindika, in Sravasti, concerning the magnificence of the land of happiness and the virtue of Amida. It was translated into Chinese by Kumarajiva in 402 A.D.

Of these three Sutras, what is most important is the Muryojukyo; for it is in this Sutra that the true signification of Amida to save all sentient beings is explained with thoroughness, and the teaching of Shin Buddhism is no

more than the doctrine enunciated in this Sutra. As to the signification of the other two Sutras, we assume a double interpretation, apparent and hidden. The apparent signification of these Sutras, then, is that they supply us with a provisional means whereby we are finally led to the ultimate reason of salvation by faith in Amida, while their hidden meaning is to unfold the real purport of salvation by faith in Amida, which is also the teaching of the Muryojukyo above mentioned. Thus, all these canonical books constitute the sacred lore of Shin Buddhism, whose essential doctrine is to show the way of salvation through the grace of Amida.

There were a great many Indian, Chinese and Japanese predecessors of Shinran Shonin, who like him preached the true doctrine of salvation by faith. And of these we regard the following seven as most contributing to the development of the teaching of Shin Buddhism; that is, in India we have Nagar-

juna and Vasubandhu; in China, Donran (T'an-luan), Doshaku (Tao-ch'ao), and Zendo (Shan-tao); and in Japan, Genshin and Genku (also called Hōnen). They are designated the Seven Fathers (*Kōso*, meaning high priests) of Shin Buddhism. Each one of them left writings specially elucidating the faith and philosophy of it; they are:

Nagarjuna—"Dasabhumi-vibhasha-sastra," the ninth chapter on The Easy Practice," (*Igyōhon*).

Nagarjuna—"The Twelve Stanzas of Adoration" (*Jūnirai*).

Vasubandhu—"Discourse on the Pure Land."

Doran—"Commentary" on Vasubandhu's discourse on the Pure Land, 2 vols.

Donran—"Hymns Praising Amida Buddha."

Doshaku—"A Compendium Concerning the Land of Happiness" (*Anraku-shū*). 2 vols.

Zendo—"A Commentary on the Kwanmuryojukyo," 4 vols.

Zendo—"Service Book for the Pure Land school" (*Jodohojisan*).

Zendo—"Directions for Meditation and Invocation" (*Kwannenbomon*).

Zendo—"Hymns on the Verse in the Pure Land" (*Wojoraisan*).

Zendo—"Hymns on the Presence of the Buddha" (*Hanjusan*).

Genshin—"A Compendium Concerning Rebirth in the Pure Land" (*Wojoyoshu*), 3 vols.

Genku—"A Compendium Concerning the Invocation of the Buddha's Name" (*Senjaku-hongwan-nembusshu*), 2 vols.

From this, it is evident that the fundamental truth of Shin Buddhism was first taught by Sakyamuni himself, which was developed later in detail and made more manifest by these seven fathers of the Shin, while Shinran Shonin synthesised all these teachings severally brought forward by his predecessors into one system and gave it

the name of Shin Buddhism, that is the True Sect of the Pure Land, whereby the doctrine of salvation by faith gained a new and deeper and clearer significance. In this sense, therefore, he is the founder of Shin Buddhism, and his work on the "Doctrine, Practice, Faith, and Attainment" of the Shin is its fundamental text book.

II. SYSTEMATISATION

BUDDHISM is a most complex system of religion, and its founder, Sakyamuni, taught his followers in various ways according to their different abilities, characters and dispositions; the Buddha opened many a gate of entrance for his disciples, and of these we now distinguish generally two main path ways to salvation. One of them is the way directly leading to the truth of salvation whereby one can escape from this world of suffering; while the other is a provisionary way which will prepare one to enter finally upon the

path of truth. It is necessary for students of Buddhism to keep this distinction in mind. Let us now see what an insight Shinran Shonin had into the essential truth of Buddhism, according to what is taught in the above-mentioned three Sutras and by those seven great predecessors of his.

Buddhism divides itself into two principal schools, historically known as the Lesser and the Greater Vehicle; the former meant for those Buddhists who are satisfied with a comparatively inferior attainment, while the Greater Vehicle teaches the way of great enlightenment whereby the attainment of Buddhahood is made possible. Therefore, the doctrine of the Greater Vehicle must be regarded as superior to that of the Lesser Vehicle. But in the former we again distinguish what is called the Path for the Wise (*Shodomon*) from that of the Pure Land (*Jodomon*). The Path for the Wise is one that will lead a Buddhist to a state of saintliness

while on earth, disciplining himself in all virtues and uprooting evil desires; whereas the Path of the Pure Land teaches us to attain to Buddhahood by being born in the Pure Land of Amida. The Path for the Wise requires one to gain enlightenment through one's own efforts, and its prescribed discipline is naturally beset with difficulties. Therefore, it is properly called the *Jirikikyo* or the doctrine of "self-power," by which it is meant that one can be saved by one's own individual efforts; it is also called, for this reason, *Nangyodo*, which is to say, the way difficult to practise.

The Path of the Pure Land, on the other hand, teaches the possibility of attaining enlightenment through a power other than one's own; and, therefore, this way is naturally considered far easier than the other, and we call it the *Tarikikyo*, that is, the doctrine teaches salvation by a power other than one's own; it is thus the *Igyodo*, meaning the way easy to practise. It

is evident, then, that if a man is not highly endowed with wisdom and intelligence, and of wide learning, he will find it extremely difficult to follow up the Path for the Wise. For such people as ourselves who were born in these latter days far from the time of the Buddha, and who are not endowed with wisdom or intelligence, and have no wide learning, the best policy will be to walk along the Path of the Pure Land, believing in salvation through the grace of Amida.

The Buddhism of the Greater Vehicle can also be viewed as having two classes of teaching, the Gradual (*zen*) and the Abrupt (*ton*). The Gradual is the doctrine that teaches the attainment of final enlightenment after gradual passing through stages of discipline; while, according to the Abrupt teaching, one can reach the goal, as if by a sudden leap, without successively passing through various stages of ascension.

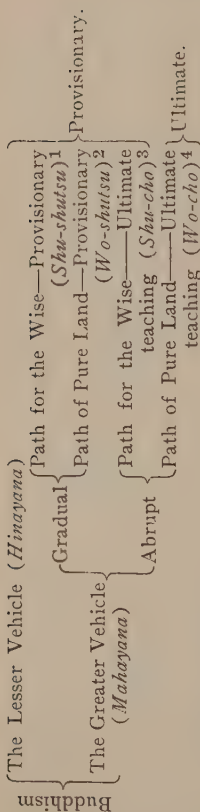
This distinction of the Gradual and

the Abrupt can also be applied to the Path for the Wise as well as to the Path of the Pure Land. The Gradual teaching in the Path for the Wise says that Buddhahood is attainable by practising the six virtues of perfection (*paramitas*) for a long long period. The Abrupt teaching in the Path for the Wise, on the contrary, is not so patient and wishing to attain Buddhahood all at once, teaches that when a man realises his spiritual oneness with the Buddha, he is Buddha. While this latter teaching points out the direct way of attaining Buddhahood, the Gradual way is provisional inasmuch as its function is to prepare one for the final and real comprehension of the truth.

Now, the distinction between the Gradual and the Abrupt in the Path of the Pure Land is that, according to the former, one is able to enter into the Pure Land of Amida only by degrees, and not, as it were, at a stroke; for a man can only be born on the outskirts

of the Pure Land if he wishes to be there by the accumulation of good deeds through his own efforts, and it is after another accumulation of merits that he can have his faith firmly established and at last be a resident in the Pure Land proper; whereas the Abrupt doctrine teaches that when a man, having an immovable faith in the absolute saving power of Amida, completely resigns himself into the land of the Buddha, this faith of his at once determines his destiny to be born in the Pure Land proper, and he is able to have a spiritual insight into the enlightenment of the Buddha. It is apparent, then, that this latter teaching penetrates more deeply into the truth of the doctrine of the Pure Land than the other one, which is merely a provisional or preparatory step leading up to the ultimate truth.

There are, thus, two classes or grades of teaching in the doctrine for the Wise as well as in that of the Pure Land, Provisionary and Ultimate. But the



1. "Lengthwise going-out."

2. "Crosswise going-out."

3. "Lengthwise passing-over."

4. "Crosswise passing-over."

These four terms are too technical to be briefly explained here; suffice it to quote a passage from the *Shinshu-kyoshi* ("Principal teachings of the True Sect" by K. Ogurusu), relating to the subject. The translation is by James Troup of England:

"Again, within the Shodomon there are the methods (schools) of 'lengthwise going-out' and 'lengthwise passing-over.' The Hossu and San-ron Sects belong to the school of 'lengthwise going-out'; the Keron, Tendai, Shingon, and Zen Sects belong to that of the 'lengthwise passing-over.' In the Jodo-mon there are the methods of 'crosswise going-out,' and 'crosswise passing-over.' Salvation by various action constitutes 'crosswise going-out.' This depends on the power of one's self. Salvation by remembrance of the Name of Buddha constitutes 'crosswise passing-over.' This depends on the Power of Another."

Ultimate teaching in the doctrine for the Wise, when compared to the corresponding grade of teaching in the doctrine of the Pure Land, must be regarded as still belonging to the Preparatory grade; for the former is the path beset with difficulties requiring an extraordinary amount of discipline to overcome them. The tabular view shown here will make it easier for us to understand the foregoing statement more graphically.

The conclusion of all this is that the Abrupt teaching in the doctrine of the Pure Land is the final path leading to the truth of Buddhahood attainable by all sentient beings; and this is the teaching of Shin Buddhism.

III. THE MEANING OF THE SHIN

BY the Shin we mean the true sect of the Pure Land as teaching the truth of the Pure Land doctrine; that is to say, the way pointing to a rebirth in the Pure Land of Amida.

We can imagine the existence of three paths leading to the Pure Land of Amida, one of which is broad and safe, while the other two are rough and narrow. This broad and safe one is the true way that assures our rebirth in the Pure Land.

The Pure Land of Amida is a land of perfect beauty founded upon the truth of goodness, and not a particle of impurity can be brought in there. Therefore, however apparently good, moral and praiseworthy our conduct may seem in this world, it can not be said to be good perfectly free from every trace of impurity; because it has issued out of a heart ever full of defilement. And it will be an impossibility for us to be born in the Pure Land through our human will and moral discipline; nay, if indeed a person wants to be born there, he must absolutely renounce his self-will.

Through what power shall we be allowed to be born in the Pure Land?

The question has been answered in the very beginning of things, for the will of Amida entertains no doubt as to this point. That pure and beautiful land of happiness is for us; Amida wishing to have us join him in his Pure Land, is ever showering his light upon us in order to make us grow in wisdom and to become conscious of our sinfulness and falsehood, whereby we might come to entertain the desire of being born in the land of truth and goodness. It is thus entirely due to the effulgence of the infinite light of Amida that we have grown at all conscious of the darkness existing in our hearts and awakened an aspiration after the land of eternal light. Amida who has brought up our minds to this state while we were altogether unaware of his existence, is now beckoning us saying: "Hear my name of truth and goodness, awaken your consciousness as to the impurity and falsehood which altogether darken your hearts, and have your

destiny absolutely entrusted into my hands that will save you from sin and ignorance." Those who listen to this call of Amida, and growing aware of their sinfulness, surrender themselves to the will of the Buddha, and grasp his hand of salvation with absolute confidence, are embraced in the truth and goodness of his love that saves; and after death they will no more be the owner of such a defiled mind and body as they have now, but being born in the land of happiness and purity, they will be given infinite wisdom and love. If it were not for the love of Amida who wills to save all beings, we should have no opportunity to be born in his Land of Purity. Therefore, the true way of being born in the Buddha-country lies in crossing this sea of suffering on board the boat of love steered by Amida. This way is called the *Gugwan*, by which is meant the Buddha's will to save all beings.

But there are some who can not resign

themselves entirely to the Buddha's will to save; though approaching the true way, they are not yet quite ready to surrender themselves to Amida, whose arms are extended towards them for their salvation, but desire to be born in the Pure Land through the merit of reciting his name with singleness of heart. These people, believing there is no other way of being born in the Pure Land but through the reciting of Amida's name, place too much emphasis on the reciting itself and have the tendency to repeat the name of the Buddha as many times as they can. These are the people who want to be in the Pure Land partly through their own efforts. They would be born on the outskirts of it if their hearts remain serene at the time of their death. We call, however, this way the *Shimmon*, or the gate of reality.

There are still others who can not enter even upon the path of the so called *Shimmon*; for they so strongly

believe in their own efficiency that they desire to be born in the Pure Land of Amida through the accumulation of merits gained by their own moral and religious deeds. Such people would be born on the outskirts of the Pure Land if by the accumulation of merits their hearts remain undisturbed. This way is known as the *Yomon*, meaning the gate of importance.

These two gates or ways, the *Shimon* and the *Yomon*, are not the true roads leading to the Pure Land. As there is the mixture here of one's own impure will, one is barred from the Pure Land proper; only by the grace of the Buddha, one is allowed to approach a region lying on the outskirts. To such a one, the time will come when he will realise his own fault after years of self-discipline in the outlying district of the Pure Land, and then he will for the first time come to the path of truth. It is, then, evident that these two gates are merely provisional narrow ones

furnished for those who are unable to enter at once upon the path of truth, while the *Gugwan* way is the only true ultimate one directly carrying us to the abode of Amida.

When a man thus perceives the existence of these three different roads to the Pure Land, he must guard himself against going astray, and follow the true straight road of the *Gugwan*. The doctrine that teaches this is called Shin Buddhism, that is to say, The True Sect of the Pure Land.

IV. SALVATION

IN the teaching of Shin Buddhism, we have expounded the truly all-embracing love of Amida to save all beings from ignorance and pain. It is the net of boundless compassion cast by the Buddha's own hands into the sea of misery and transmigration, in which the ignorant rather than the wise, the

sinful rather than the good, are meant to be gathered up. This love and compassion is eternally abiding with the Buddha, whose will to save all beings knows no temporal limitations; and on this account the Buddha is called *Amitayus* (Eternal Life). His power to save is manifest in his light. Though invisible to our defiled eyes, this light is constantly shedding its rays upon all sentient beings ever leading us onward to the awakening of faith. Those who have awakened this faith in the saving grace of Amida, are at once embraced in his light and destined after death to be reborn into the Pure Land. This light is the will of Amida under whose merciful care all beings are made to grow; it reaches every part of the universe, knowing no spatial limitations. Therefore, the Buddha is also called *Amitabha* (Infinite Light). His will to save is, thus, infinite not only in time but in space, hence his two attributes, *Amitayus* and *Amitabha*. In

China and Japan, he is briefly known as Amida, meaning the Infinite.

Amida is the Father of all beings; he is the Only One; he has, from the very beginning of all things, been contriving to save the world, and once incarnated himself in the person of Bhikshu Dharmakara, to deliver the message of happiness among us. The Bhikshu invoked the forty-eight vows as recorded in the Muryojukyo; the main idea of which is that "I will make every one enjoy a rebirth in the Pure Land if he hear my name and believe in my will to save and rejoice in it." It is said that, before making this wish or vow, the Bhikshu cogitated for a period of five kalpas; that, in order to fulfil the wish, he accumulated innumerable merits by practising the six virtues of perfection for innumerable kalpas, with a heart full of love and compassion and free from all defilement; and finally, that the fulfilment of this vow took place ten kalpas ago.

Amida is now summonning us to his Land of Purity by showing us his name that saves.

This world of ours is defiled with sin and suffering; neither the wise nor the ignorant are free from sin, the noble as well as the poor are suffering pain. He that declares himself to be sinless must be either insane or an idiot. Even when, judging from our own ignorant conditions, we imagine ourselves happy, we may be deceiving ourselves; for in the Buddha's eye our apparent happiness may be a real pain. In such a world of impurity as this, it is impossible to find a true state of peace and happiness. Fame, wealth, love, learning,—so many evils are ever leading us downwards into the abyss of utter darkness. Where can we then find a region which harbours no pain? There stands Amida pointing to his Land of Purity and Happiness (*Sukhavati*), where our worldly sufferings and retributions are no more. In this

land there always smiles the spring of peace. No pain, no sin, but all beauty, goodness and joy. Those born there enjoy a happiness that knows no ending; they are endowed not only with infinite wisdom and liberty, but with pure love and compassion which has the power to save all beings from the world of pain. All this happiness enjoyed by those who are in the Pure Land is the outcome of Amida's love and will to save.

Amida thus grudges nothing for our deliverance from sin; with various contrivances, good and excellent, he ever leads us to the way of salvation, and it is through his grace that we have in ourselves the reason of salvation and are allowed to enjoy its fulfilment. Now, Amida has two ways of showing his grace towards us: The one is called Oso-eko, which means that the Buddha supplies us not only with the cause of our rebirth in the Pure Land but with its result; and the other is called Genso-

eko, meaning that he confers upon us the power to come back to this world of pain even after our rebirth in the Pure Land, in order to deliver our fellow-beings from sufferings. In the Oso-eko there are four things to be distinguished, which are teaching, practice, faith, and attainment. The following scheme will make us understand this better:

Oso-eko	{	1. Teaching, as set forth in the Muryojukyo (in two volumes).	} Cause
		2. Practice, or reciting the name of Amida.	
		3. Faith, or believing in his will to save.	
		4. Attainment, or being born in the Pure Land and becoming a Buddha.	} Effect
Genso-eko	{	Coming back to the world of suffering to save the fellow beings.	

This will be explained more in detail:

The Teaching. Amida once assumed a human form and appeared on earth in order to save us from sin and ignor-

ance; and Sakyamuni was he. The most important of all his teachings is the MURYOJUKYO, in which is brought forth the true signification of salvation by Amida. In fact, the very object of his appearance on earth was to teach this Sutra and to establish the foundation of Shin Buddhism. In other words, therefore, we can say that the Shin is the direct revelation of Amida himself.

The Practice. We are now acquainted with the name of Amida according to the discourse by Sakyamuni, and we know that in this name is embodied the significance of Amida's will to save; for to hear the name is to hear the voice of salvation, saying, "Trust in me, for I will surely save you,"—a word coming directly from Amida. Such, indeed, being the sense embodied in the name of Amida, we must express deep feeling of gratitude by reciting his name as he wills when we have been able to hear the call of our

Father so full of love and compassion. In Sanskrit the recitation runs: "Namo 'mitābhāya Buddhāya" or "Namo 'mitāyushe Buddhāya," but in Japanese briefly "Na-Mu-A-Mi-Da-Bu."

While all other deeds of ours are more or less defiled, the reciting of Namu Amida Bu is an act free from impurities; for it is not we that recite it, but Amida himself, who, giving us his own name, makes us recite it.

The Faith. When we hear the name of Amida, we can not help but believe in the certainty of our salvation, and this belief, too, comes from the grace of Amida. For (1) when we come to think of his will to save, we are unable to deceive ourselves as to our inner life full of falsehoods, and to behave as if we were thoroughly wise. This must be, because the will of Amida, pure and free from falsehood, descends upon us. (2) The moment we hear the name of the Buddha and surrender ourselves to his will, we grow convinced of our own

salvation through his grace and gain peace of mind; this will, however, be impossible, if not for the fact that Amida's will to save everyone who enters into his love affirms itself in us.

(3) The moment we believe in our salvation through his grace, we awake within ourselves a desire to be born in his Pure Land, and are happy in the conviction that it will be done as we desire. This must be due to the influence upon us of Amida's overflowing love which invites us to join him in the Pure Land. Therefore, we conclude that when he come to rely upon Amida for our salvation it is entirely due to his grace and not to our personal efforts. Indeed, this feeling of dependence, of this faith in Amida, is no more nor less than his own will.

The Attainment. The instant the belief is confirmed in our salvation through Amida, our destiny is settled that we are to be reborn in the Pure Land and become a Buddha. Then it

is said that we are all embraced in the light of Amida, and, living under his loving guidance, our life after confirmation of faith is but filled with joy unspeakable, which is a gift of Amida. Then we have no need to pray the gods or Buddhas for more happiness in this life; for are we not already enjoying all the happiness that could be obtained here? If we still have to suffer misfortune, it is the outcome of evil deeds committed by ourselves in the past; and this no amount of praying will remove. It is only after our rebirth in the Land of Happiness that we are allowed to lead a life absolutely free from pain.

At the end of our earthly life, we cast aside every trace of this defiled existence; and upon being in the Land of Purity and Happiness, we attain to the enlightenment of the Buddha. And it is not necessary at this moment of rebirth to keep our last thoughts on earth in tranquillity, and wait for the coming

of the Buddha to take us into his country. As we have already been living encircled by the rays of Amida, however disturbed our last moments, we are sure to be led into the Pure Land through the mysterious operation of the Buddha light.

The Land of Happiness is the garden of Nirvana. Those who are born there, gain the great enlightenment of Nirvana, enjoy a life everlasting, and are forever free from the bondage of birth and death. Not only this, they are then able to manifest themselves over and over again in the world of suffering in order to deliver their fellow-beings from sin and ignorance. All these innumerable happiness we can enjoy come from no other source than the grace of Amida.

V. FAITH.

WHAT kind of faith does Shin Buddhism require of its followers? Not much, only to surrender them-

selves to the will of Amida; and his will is: "Trust in me with singleness of heart, and you will assuredly be saved." Let us, therefore, surrender ourselves to his will and harbour no other thought than to be embraced in his arms of grace, wishing to be saved in the life to come. Amida is the leader of all the Buddhas. It is he who holds the key to all the mysteries of existence. When we bow before him in all humility, we shall be protected from evils by all the gods and Buddhas. All those followers of the Shin who pray to a Buddha or Bodhisattva other than Amida are either misunderstanding, or do not fully believe in, the love of Amida, that saves all beings without exception. A faith one entertains for an absolute being must also be absolute and unconditional. Let us, therefore, rely upon no other mystery than Amida himself, who is the mystery of mysteries; and it is he alone that can save us unconditionally and supremely.

The name of Amida is the most worshipful one in the whole universe; and all the roots of goodness and all the stock of merits are gathered up in this name; and the reciting of it is the noblest thing to do in the world, the best of all good deeds one could think of. When we recite the name of Amida, we grow conscious of the inferiority of all other deeds to the reciting itself. However noble, honourable, and beautiful a moral or religious deed may appear to our worldly consideration, it has no power to lead us into the Pure Land proper where abides Amida himself, for we have nothing to add, even an iota, to the love of Amida which alone can save us from sin. All that we can do is to surrender ourselves,—our sin, our ignorance, our destiny, and our all,—into the all-embracing love of Amida, and to express our inmost feeling of gratitude for the grace of the Buddha by reciting his name.

To thus resign oneself to the will of

Amida and to follow his guiding hand to salvation, is the faith required by Shin Buddhism of its followers. In this faith we recognise two things: (1) that we are such sinful beings as are destined to be inhabitants of Hell, that we are prisoners forever to be confined in the world of pain, that our eyes of wisdom are closed and our legs of morality broken and we are spiritual invalids; (2) that it is the love of Amida who has cherished the thought of saving these sinful creatures and taken vows that he will not stop his efforts until every single being is carried to his Pure Land, that however sinful, all who believe in Amida and his will to save will surely be born in the Land of Happiness. How could we then but rejoice in the surety of our salvation through his grace?

In these two facts of faith all the followers of Shin Buddhism agree, and know that this is altogether due to the will of Amida himself and that we are

absolutely dependent upon him. So long as we are not aware of our salvation through Amida, we may think that we are something, not altogether a negligible quantity; but we find ourselves entirely at fault, when we come to realise the merciful design of the Buddha to save us through his will of goodness and truth, our spiritual eyes are open to the inner darkness of our hearts, full of impurities and falsehoods; and we are most penitent over our utter ignorance. While we were not acquainted with Amida's will to save, we thought we were lonely travellers not knowing whither to go, or like helpless orphans who have no loving parents, no one greeting home. But the moment the name of Amida opens our hitherto unknown spiritual region in us, we are deeply grateful and happy. We now know that we are his children, he is our worshipful father who protects us every moment of our existence, that the home we are going to abide in

is already magnificently built, and that we, led by the guiding hand of our father, are approaching our home step by step. Such in brief is the faith entertained by the followers of Shin Buddhism.

VI. LIFE

SHIN Buddhism is a religion for the home, teaching to be loyal to master, filial to parents, affectionate to wife and children, to be industrious in work, doing all things that contribute to the general welfare, and believing in Amida's will to save. There is no necessity, according to the doctrine of the Shin, to flee from the world and to discipline oneself in certain religious austerities; one may lead an official life, engage in business, or be a soldier, or farmer, or fisherman, each diligent in his chosen occupation, and believing in Amida with a devoted heart. The life of the follower of the Shin is not difficult; only let him, while continuing

on his sinful and ignorant life, be most deeply grateful for the grace of Amida, who loves us so much that he is willing to save us as we are, ignorant and sinful; let us then recite his name from fulness of heart and be ever industrious in our daily work.

The will of the Buddha is manifest everywhere and in everything, it is present in the person of our teacher, parents, brother, wife, children, friends, and also in the state or community to which we may belong; the Buddha is protecting, nourishing, consoling, and instructing us in every possible way. What we owe to the Buddha is not only when we are carried into his Pure Land, but even when we are living our daily life on earth, for which latter fact we must also be deeply grateful. Let us not forget how much we owe to our present surroundings, and to regard them with reverence and love. We must endeavour as much as we can to execute our duties faithfully, to work for

the growth of Buddhism, for the good of the family, state, and society, and thus to requite even a thousandth part of what we owe to Amida. To work thus for the world with a sense of gratitude is the true life of the Buddhist.

The Buddhist never loses an inward feeling of joy as he most deeply believes in his rebirth in the Pure Land through the grace of Amida, but as far as his outward appearances go, let him have nothing particularly to distinguish him as such from other people. A Buddhist officer, or Buddhist soldier, or Buddhist man of business has nothing peculiar about him as to single him out as Buddhist from among his fellow-workers; he obeys the moral laws, moves according to the regulations of the state, does nothing against habits or customs of his times and country, so long as they are not morally offensive; the only thing that distinguishes him most conspicuously from his non-Buddhist fellow-beings, is his inward life

filled with joy and happiness, because of his faith in Amida's love to save all beings. For what constitutes the true Buddhist is not his outward features but his inner life.

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